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In 1305, the Prior of this abbey sued Odo, the Prior of Athlone, for the advowson of the vicarage of the church of Randowne.—*Rot. P. B. T. No. 52.*

The other abbey is said to have been founded under the invocation of the Holy Trinity for Præmonstre Canons, by Clarus Mac Moylin O'Maolchonry, Archdeacon of Elphin, about the year 1215.

Of all these structures, as well military as religious and domestic, there only remain at present deserted and time-worn ruins, but these ruins are of great interest, and speak most eloquently of the past. The most important feature amongst them is the castle, which occupies a rocky eminence, rising abruptly from the water on the shore of the small inlet called Safe Harbour, in which it may be presumed that the armed vessels employed upon Lough Ree found security under the walls of the fortress. This castle is well described by Mr Weld, in his excellent Survey of Roscommon, as being built nearly in the form of the letter P, the tail of the letter being short in proportion, and occupied by a spacious apartment for banqueting or assembly. In the head of the letter, next the upright stem, is placed the keep, a lofty, massive, and before the use of artillery, impregnable structure: it has a court before it to the east, which was defended along the curve by a strong wall, with banquette and parapet, and ditches of great depth, on the outer side. The line represented by the stem of the letter, stretching in a direction across the point, is in length above two hundred and forty feet, and is protected at its base by that great artificial fosse which insulated this lower portion of the peninsula and the castle as already stated, but which is now nearly dry, the level having been altered by the rubbish which has fallen into it from the ruins. Nearly in the centre of this line appear the remains of abutments, both on the castle and outer side of the fosse, marking the site of the draw-bridge, and opposite to a small gateway in the castle wall. "The keep," Mr Weld observes, "as beheld both on the land side and from the lake, presents a very imposing mass, its outer walls being entire, and its great tower rising to a very considerable elevation: but the edifice on the land side appears almost shapeless, owing to the extraordinary luxuriance of the ivy with which it is overrun, originating from two vast flatted stems which spring up over the base of the walls, just over the long fosse. I had the curiosity to measure them, and found the one to be four feet six inches, and the other seven feet five inches broad, presenting, though with many sinuosities, an undivided face of bark, from side to side, and still growing with great vigour. I cannot call to recollection having seen a more vast and uninterrupted mass of ivy foliage."

The great tower is about fifty feet broad next the fosse: in the upper story, traces of windows appear through the ivy, and of small watch-towers at the angles. Like the other great castles of the country, it was evidently destroyed by violence; and nothing short of the powerful effects of gunpowder could have cast down the prodigious fragments of masonry which stand insulated in the inner court. The view of the castle is extremely pleasing from the water, and more particularly so, when the sheltered harbour beneath its walls receives a little fleet of the beautiful sailing pleasure-boats which are used upon this lake, the gaiety of whose ensigns and painted sides forms a remarkable contrast to the sombre tints of the ancient ivied walls, and the grey rocks on which they repose."

A short distance to the east of the castle, the remains of a round watch-tower, as it would appear to be, crown the summit of a promontory which is the highest point of the peninsula. Its diameter within is about fourteen feet, and the walls are four feet thick. The entrance and the window opposite to it face the water, and command most pleasing views up and down the lake. The window, surmounted by a flat rounded arch, about seven feet in height, is more spacious than such as are usually seen in a building of this kind, and affords ample light to the chamber. The ground between this promontory and the eminence occupied by the castle is low and marshy, and water probably once flowed over it.

In addition to the fosse already described, the castle, and indeed the whole peninsula, was further protected by a great wall which crossed from one side to the other. According to Mr Weld's measurements, this wall is 564 yards in length from water to water, its distance from the castle-fosse being 700 yards. "Nearly in the middle of it is an arched gateway, with its defences still tolerably entire, twenty-four feet deep, and presenting a front of twenty-one feet: between this gate and the water at either side there are square towers, at

unequal intervals of from sixty to ninety yards, advanced about thirteen feet beyond the line of the walls, and being in breadth about fifteen feet: in the interior the dimensions are about eight feet six inches. These towers doubtless afforded stations for the archers, and also facilitated the access to the parapet and banquette of the wall. Whether there ever had been a fosse on the outer side, I am unable to say; the probability is, that there was; but if so, the ground has been levelled, and the rank luxuriance of vegetation has obliterated its lines. The building of the wall, however, appears in many parts to have been hastily executed, and cement to have been sparingly used, yet it still remains a most interesting monument of the military works of past ages."

Of the ecclesiastical edifices of Rinn-duin, but small remains exist, and as their names are lost to tradition, it is difficult now to identify them with certainty. The principal ruin, which is situated near the draw-bridge over the great fosse, on the land side, is most probably the church erected in the commencement of the thirteenth century, and dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Neither windows nor doorways exist to give any idea of its style, but its walls are in sufficient preservation to show the form and dimensions of the building. Like most important Irish churches it consists of a nave and choir; the nave is sixty feet long and twenty-four feet wide, the choir thirty-three feet long and eighteen wide. This church, it may be presumed, stood in a conspicuous part of the town; but not a vestige now remains of any other edifice, either ecclesiastical or domestic, between the castle and the fortified wall across the isthmus. The rude remains of the other ecclesiastical buildings are situated on the outer side of the fortified wall, and are connected with a burial-ground still much used; but there is nothing in these remains worthy of particular notice.

A desire to supply, as far as in our power, a chasm in our local histories, has induced us to extend our notice of the remains of Rinn-duin to a greater length than that usually allotted to our topographical papers, the history of these remains having been hitherto involved in great darkness. Dr Ledwich, in his account of the castle, written for Grose's Antiquities of Ireland, briefly states that there are no memorials of its structure! And even Mr Weld, the latest writer who has described this locality, remarks, that "as to its past history, it is involved in a mysterious and perhaps now impenetrable obscurity." By the publication, for the first time, of much matter hitherto locked up in manuscript records, we have, as we trust, thrown no small additional light on the history of these interesting remains; and we have only to add, that for the documents which we have used, we are in part indebted to the kindness of Sir W. Betham, and still more to that of our friend Mr O'Donovan, who has allowed us the use of his translation of the unpublished Annals of the Four Masters.

P.

A VENETIAN DIDDLER.

WHEN in Venice, I had but two zecchinos left wherewith to fight my way through this wicked world. My spirits for the first time deserted me: I never passed so miserably a night in my life, and in shame of my "doublet and hose," I felt very much inclined to "cry like a child." While tossing on my pillow, however, I chanced to recollect a letter which my landlord of Bologna, Signor Passerini, had given me to a friend of his, a Signor Andrioli; for, as he told me, he thought the introduction might be of use to me.

In the morning I went to the Rialto coffee-house, to which I was directed by the address of the letter. Here I found the gentleman who was the object of my search. After reading my credentials very graciously, he smiled, and requested me to take a turn with him in the Piazza St Marc. He was a fine-looking man, of about sixty years of age. I remarked there was an aristocratic manner about him, and he wore a very large tie-wig, well powdered, with an immensely long tail. He addressed me with a benevolent and patronizing air, and told me that he should be delighted to be of service to me, and bade me from that moment consider myself under his protection. "A little business," said he, "calls me away at this moment, but if you will meet me here at two o'clock, we will adjourn to my casino, where, if you can dine on one dish, you will perhaps do me the favour to partake of a boiled capon and rice. I can only offer you that; perhaps a rice soup, for which my cook is famous; and it may be just one or two little things not worth mentioning."

A boiled capon—rice soup—other little things, thought I—

man in the wilderness! I strolled about, not to get an appetite, for that was ready, but to kill time. My excellent, hospitable, long-tailed friend was punctual to the moment; I joined him, and proceeded towards his residence.

As we were bending our steps thither, we happened to pass a *lupanigera's* (a ham-shop), in which there was some ham ready dressed in the window. My powdered patron paused, —it was an awful pause; he reconnoitred, examined, and at last said, "Do you know, Signor, I was thinking that some of that ham would eat deliciously with our capon:—I am known in this neighbourhood, and it would not do for me to be seen buying ham. But do you go in, my child, and get two or three pounds of it, and I will walk on and wait for you."

I went in of course, and purchased three pounds of the ham, to pay for which I was obliged to change one of my two *zecchinos*. I carefully folded up the precious viand, and rejoined my excellent patron, who eyed the relishing slices with the air of a *gourmand*; indeed, he was somewhat diffuse in his own dispraise for not having recollected to order his servant to get some before he left home. During this peripatetic lecture on gastronomy, we happened to pass a cantina, in plain English, a wine-cellar. At the door he made another full stop.

"In that house," said he, "they sell the best Cyprus wine in Venice—peculiar wine—a sort of wine not to be had any where else; I should like you to taste it; but I do not like to be seen buying wine by retail to carry home; go in yourself; buy a couple of flasks, and bring them to my *cassino*; nobody hereabouts knows you, and it won't signify in the least."

This last request was quite appalling; my pocket groaned to its very centre; however, recollecting that I was on the high road to preferment, and that a patron, cost what he might, was still a patron, I made the plunge, and, issuing from the cantina, set forward for my venerable friend's *cassino*, with three pounds of ham in my pocket, and a flask of wine under each arm.

I continued walking with my excellent long-tailed patron, expecting every moment to see an elegant, agreeable residence, smiling in all the beauties of nature and art; when, at last, in a dirty miserlike lane, at the door of a tall dingy-looking house, my *Mæcenas* stopped, indicated that we had reached our journey's end, and, marshalling me the way that I should go, began to mount three flights of sickening stairs, at the top of which I found his *cassino*: it was a little Cas, and a deuce of a place to boot; in plain English, it was a garret. The door was opened by a wretched old miscreant, who acted as cook, and whose drapery, to use a gastronomic simile, was "done to rags."

Upon a ricketty apology for a table were placed a tattered cloth, which once had been white, and two plates; and presently in came a large bowl of boiled rice.

"Where's the capon?" said my patron to his man.

"Capon!" echoed the ghost of a servant; "the——"

"Has not the rascal sent it?" cried the master.

"Rascal!" repeated the man, apparently terrified.

"I knew he would not," exclaimed my patron, with an air of exultation, for which I saw no cause. "Well, well, never mind, put down the ham and the wine; with those and the rice, I dare say, young gentleman, you will be able to make it out. I ought to apologise, but in fact it is all your own fault that there is not more; if I had fallen in with you earlier, we should have had a better dinner."

I confess I was surprised, disappointed, and amused; but as matters stood, there was no use in complaining, and accordingly we fell to, neither of us wanting the best of all sauces—appetite.

I soon perceived that my promised patron had baited his trap with a fowl to catch a fool; but as we ate and drank, all care vanished, and, rogue as I suspected him to be, my long-tailed friend was a clever witty fellow, and, besides telling me a number of anecdotes, gave me some very good advice; amongst other things to be avoided, he cautioned me against numbers of people who in Venice lived only by duping the unwary. I thought this counsel came very ill from him. "Above all," said he, "keep up your spirits, and recollect the Venetian proverb, 'A hundred years of melancholy will not pay one farthing of debt.'"—*Reminiscences of Michael Kelly.*

Poets often compare life to the sea; and the truth is, that, however bright the surface may be, they are both of them, whenever analysis is used, *salt water*.

APOLOGUES AND FABLES,

IN PROSE AND VERSE, FROM THE GERMAN AND OTHER LANGUAGES.

(Translated for the Irish Penny Journal.)

No. III.—THE STORY OF THE OLD WOLF.

I.

SIR ISEGRIM, the Wolf, was grown old. The years that had passed over his head, too, had brought with them changes hardly to be expected in a wolf at any season of life. All his fierceness and ferocity were gone; he was no longer the slayer of sheep and terror of shepherds: no; he had lost his teeth, and was now a philosopher. To superficial observers, perhaps, the alteration in his character might not have been very obvious; but he himself knew that he was no more what he had been—that his lupuline prowess had departed from him. He resolved accordingly on showing mankind what a reformation had overtaken him. "One of my brethren," said he, "once assumed the garb of a lamb, but he was still a wolf at heart. I reverse the fable; I seem outwardly a wolf, but at heart I am a lamb. Appearances are deceptive; whatever prejudices may be excited against me by my exterior, with which I was born, and for which I am not accountable, I have that within which passeth show. I trust that I feel an exemplary horror for the blood-thirstiness of my juvenile instincts, and the savage revellings of my maturer years. I am determined, therefore, to accommodate my way of life in future to the usages of society—to march with the spirit of the age—to cut no more throats—to become in short quite civilized—and set an example which may have the effect of eventually bringing all the wolves of the forest into the same reputable position as my own."

Full of these thoughts, and possibly some others, which he kept to himself, he set out upon a journey to the hut of the nearest shepherd, which he soon reached.

"Shepherd," said he, "I have come to talk over a little matter with you, personal to myself. You have been long the object of my esteem; I entertain a special regard for you; but you requite my esteem and regard with suspicion and hatred. You think me a lawless and sanguinary robber. My friend, you labour under a deplorable prejudice. What have I done, at least for many years back, worse than others? The head and front of my offending is that I eat sheep. Suppose so: must not every animal eat some other animal? I have the misfortune to be subject, like all quadrupeds (as well as bipeds), to hunger. Only guarantee me from the attacks of hunger; and upon my honour, Shepherd, I will never even dream of pillaging your fold. Give me enough to eat, and you may turn your dogs loose, and sleep in security. Ah! Shepherd, believe me, you do not know what a gentle, meek, sleek-tempered animal I can become when I have got what I think enough."

"When you have got what you think enough!" retorted the Shepherd, who had listened to this harangue with visible impatience; "ay, but when did you ever get what you thought enough? Did Avarice ever think it had got enough? No: you would cram your maw as the miser would his chest, and when both were gorged to repletion, the cry would still be, More! More! Go your way; you are getting into years; but I am even older than you; and your cajolery is wasted. Try somebody else, old Isegrim!"

II.

I see that I must, thought the Wolf; and prosecuting his journey farther, he came to the habitation of a second shepherd.

"Come, Shepherd!" he began stoutly, "I have a proposal to make to you. You know me, who I am, and how I live. You know that if I choose to exert my energies, I can dine and sup upon the heart's blood of every sheep and lamb under your care. Very well: now mark me; if you bestow on me half a dozen sheep every twelvemonth, I pledge you my word that I will look for no more. And only think what a fine thing it will be for you to purchase the safety of your entire flock at the beggarly price of half a dozen sheep!"

"Half a dozen sheep!" cried the Shepherd, bursting into a derisive laugh; "why, that's equal to a whole flock!"

"Well, well, I am reasonable," said the Wolf; "give me five."

"Surely you are joking," said the Shepherd. "Why, if I